REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Examiner's action of February 9, 2005, has been received and reviewed by counsel for Assignee. In that Action, claims 1-10 were presented for examination. Claims 1-7 and 10 were rejected, and claims 8 and 9 were objected to. By this response counsel has amended various claims in a manner believed to overcome the Section 112 rejections, and in a manner believed to cause all claims to now patentability distinguish the cited references. An explanation of the amendment follows.

Counsel has made various clarifying amendments to claims 4 and 8 through 10. These amendments are believed to overcome the objections stated in paragraph 3 of the Examiner's Action. Claim 6, also objected to, has been canceled.

Claims 1-7 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as unpatentable over Shevchuk, US 2003/0794998 in view of Bellman, et al. US Patent 6, 633,700.

Independent claims 1 and 10 have now been amended to call for a specific orientation of the mounting and positioning grooves. In particular, each of these claims now requires that those groves be formed by surfaces along crystal faces of the first and second (and third) substrates. The advantages of this feature are discussed in Applicants' specification on page 14 between lines 11 and 25. As stated there, there are advantages to the etching process by using wet etching to form the groves along the crystal faces. This enables the positioning pin mounting grooves and the through holes to be formed in a mask used to form the lens mounting grooves. As a result, a multiple operations are accomplished during a single process, which improves productivity and increases the accuracy of the grooves.

In contract, the grooves of Shevchuk, designated 13, 45 and 55 are all molded grooves. Shevchuk does not teach forming the mounting grooves and the positioning grooves in a collimator lens array by using surfaces along crystal faces of the substrates. Bellman, et al. do not provide this missing teaching, instead describing a method for aligning the optical fibers with the lenses by using grooves. As best counsel can determine, the grooves in bellman, et al., are not formed by using surfaces along the crystal faces of the first and second substrates. In fact, Bellman, et al, does not appear to describe how the grooves are formed in the plates 20. Accordingly, counsel believes claims 1 and 10 patentability distinguish the combination of the Shevchuk and Bellman, et al. references.

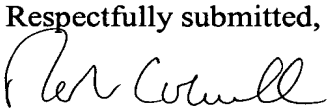
Claims 8 and 9 were indicated as allowable over the cited art if the ambiguities referenced by the Examiner were overcome. Counsel believes the amendments to claims 8 and 9 have overcome those ambiguities, and accordingly, that those claims are allowable over the cited art as well.

All of the remaining claims presently pending depend directly or indirectly from claims 1, 8, 9 or 10, and for at least that reason, those claims are believed allowable as well.

The Examiner noted that certified copies of the foreign priority documents have not yet been filed with this response, copies are provided of those two documents.

Should the Examiner have questions with respect to this response, or believed that a telephone conversation would facilitate prosecution, please telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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